

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus reduces a DC level of an input word. The input word is divided into a plurality of components that include n symbols. The n symbols of the components are summed for each component. The component is encoded into a substitute component if a sum for the component exceeds a threshold. The components having a sum that does exceed the threshold are combined with at least one substitute component into an output word. An output word template is selected based on a number of substitute components and on a position that the substitute components originally occupied in the input word. The substitute components are inserted in the output word template. The components that have a sum that does not exceed the threshold are inserted in the output word template. Address and indicator symbols are inserted in the output word.